



Active for Justice

A VOICE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND NONVIOLENCE

VOLUME XX NO.10 November/December 1999

PIKES PEAK JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION

Deepening the work of non-violent revolution

Hildegard Goss-Mayr

If it is certain that the Twentieth Century will be remembered in human history as one of bloodshed and oppression, it has also brought to humanity the gift of nonviolent liberation through "people power." In many parts of the world—from the India of Gandhi to the Philippines, Latin America and Eastern Europe—nations have experienced that dictatorial regimes can be overcome through the solidarity of nonviolent action, the arm of the poor. This is an important factor upon which one can build in the century to come.

However, out of these encouraging experiences new challenges are arising. I shall mention only one. We have been strong in overcoming dictatorships non-violently, but we are weak in preparing and building alternatives, the new societies. War and dictatorships leave nations materially and morally battered. In most cases a new, just, humane democratic society is not ready and waiting to arise. Divisions remain deep, hatred and revenge fill hearts and minds. Extreme poverty leads to criminal actions, with Mafiosi groups profiting from the dissolution of the old order. From the Philippines to South Africa to Madagascar, from the the Great Lakes region in Africa to Latin America and Eastern Europe, there is one big task before us: to help build new societies on the basis of justice, truth, respect for human rights, and the participation of all, particularly the poor and minorities.

Though we know that we have to learn a great deal about peace-building among persons, peace-builders are already at work in society. For the most part they combine inner healing with the social and political dimension, knowing that their small contribution can only be effective as part of an integrated persevering campaign. In Madagascar, for example, there is an effort now to build real communities. Others are teaching nonviolence in schools and towns, sometimes making use of local radio.

In Burundi, there are initiatives all over country to bring Hutus and Tutsis together in small groups to begin the long, hard road toward reciprocal forgiveness and reconciliation. These groups help to create the climate necessary for a cease-fire and a political solution based upon power sharing.

In Rwanda, more and more young Christians are searching for a new way of life in their parishes and communities after the traumatizing experience of genocide. In nonviolence they discover the vision and strength for a new beginning. They have developed a video, a manual, and a magazine that link their nonviolent groups in the region of the Great Lakes. Similar work for inner healing, reintegration and reconciliation is going on in Croatia and Bosnia. In Serbia and Kosovo it has to be rebuilt.

We have to prove to the world that

the way to reconciliation, while long and very demanding—passing as it does through the stages of speaking the truth, standing up for justice, and practicing the gift of forgiveness—is the only real and sound basis for a new life of peace. Only reconciliation heals the wounds of individuals and makes new politics possible.

All over the world young people are searching for peaceful ways of dealing with violence and fear. When the war in Kosovo and Serbia started, there was tension in many Austrian schools. We have many immigrants and refugees from the Balkans and children from Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, Romania and elsewhere all sit next to each other in class. In order to avoid the war's projection into the classroom, a number of teachers helped their pupils to look at the history of the Balkans and observe that there was good and evil on both sides and that they all have had common bonds. While some friendships were broken, many of these young people would say, "Let the old generation wage war; we want to live—and to live together!" And some of them began to collect money for both sides: for Kosovar refugees and for Serbian bombing victims.

Hildegard Goss-Mayr is the honorary president of the International Fellowship for Reconciliation.

Reprinted from Fellowship, Sept/Oct 1999 Vol. 66 #9-10

A man of the new Millennium brings hope

Andy Ziem

Yesterday I celebrated my 18th Birthday by buying a lotto ticket, to pay for college, of course. As an adult now, I'm privileged to buy Camels and dirty magazines, tattoo arcane symbols up and down my body—my party is sure to be interesting. So what is this "Selective Service registration?"

From the taxes I pay this year (admittedly not much after working only ten hour a week), 48% will fund the threats and wars that bring our country "peace." We are casually dropping \$1 million

AT LAST
THE 1000 DAYS OF PREPARATION FOR 1000 YEARS OF PEACE
HAVE COME TO THE

FIRST DAY

OF THE FIRST YEAR
OF THE FIRST CENTURY
OF THE THIRD MILLENNIUM



Savor the quiet
Walk the Labyrinth
Rest in Prayer
Sing for Peace

SATURDAY, JANUARY 1, 2000

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH—NORTH TEJON AND ST. VRAIN

sponsored by The 1000 Days Committee, Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commission, Life Foundation, Frist Congregational Church, et al

a time for hope
a time for mourning
a time for healing
a time for searching
a time for letting go
a time for silence
a time for singing
a time for loving
a time for peace

smart bombs on what's left of Iraq and building astronomically-expensive new aircraft, but even in well-to-do School District 20, we are short over two million. What I'm saying is that there are better uses for this money—health care, public arts, the hungry, the environment. There are good causes—like peace.

I honor martial values taught in the military: intrepidity, surrender of private interest for the higher good, obedience, physical fitness, discipline, and civic honor. The US Army is a fantastic place to learn them, but falls short in the application.

When can we commit ourselves to a true peace, not based on fear and the "biggest muscles?" (What does the United States need with 35,000 nuclear

warheads?) I will not hurt anyone, but I am ready to serve our nation and, moreover, the Prince of Peace and Lord Jesus Christ.

Micah 4:3 reads, "They beat their swords into plowshares," describing how what was once a tool of destruction can become a tool of creation. Similarly, soldiers who train to destroy distant, unseen targets can work to avoid the distant conflicts that lead to international strife. Out of the \$306 billion spent for the current military and national surplus, a new agency must be created that actively seeks to solve problems without resorting to violence and its threats.

Andy Ziem, a senior at Liberty High School, was a summer volunteer at PPJP.

TRANSPORTATION



PRIORITY ONE

PIKES PEAK JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION

235 East Fountain Blvd.
Colorado Springs, CO 80903-1329
(719) 632-6189

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Colorado Springs, CO
PERMIT NO. 499

Inside This Issue

Theme: Community: Local
and Global

Good News	p.2
Vote for 1A, 1B, 1C	p.3
Jubilee 2000	p.4/5
Derailing biotech express	p.6
Letters	p.7
Peace Planner	p.8

AROUND THE WORLD

Good news

From Scotland:

On October 20, Sheriff Margaret Gimblett instructed the jury at Greenstock Sheriff Court to acquit Angie Zelter, Ulla Roder and Ellen Moxley on the charges against them of damaging a Trident facility in Loch Goil in June of this year.

In her remarks the Sheriff effectively said that British nuclear weapons were illegal. "In the International Court of Justice opinion, the threat or use of Trident could be construed as threat, has indeed been construed by others as a threat and as such is an infringement of international and customary law. The three took the view it was illegal and, given the horrendous nature of nuclear weapons, they had the obligation in terms of international law to do whatever they could to stop the deployment and use of nuclear weapons in situations which could be construed as a threat...I have heard nothing which would make it seem to me that the accused acted with criminal intent...Therefore I intend to instruct the jury that they should acquit all three accused on charges 1 to 3."

From Port Orchard, Washington:

In June 1999 in Kitsap County District Court nine peace activists were tried for blocking the road to Bangor Trident Submarine Base on August 9, 1998. In Judge James Riehl's instruction to the jury he included:

Instruction #9 "A person acts with 'lawful authority' when he or she acts in reliance upon his or her reasonable interpretation of a relevant state or local ordinance, state or federal statute, treaty or state or federal court ruling."

Instruction #11: "You are instructed that as a matter of federal Constitutional law, states are bound to respect the terms of treaties entered into by Congress. Congress alone has the power to abrogate a treaty or impose any additional limitation. Thus to the extent there may be a conflict between a law of the state of Washington and a right granted or an obligation imposed by a treaty of the US, the right granted or the obligation imposed by the treaty will govern."

After four hours of deliberation, the jury found all the defendants not guilty.

Taking responsibility for East Timor

John Miller

We, the United States, helped create this injustice. We have the responsibility to help remedy it. We did it by supplying and training and funding Indonesia's violent human rights abuses and take-over of East Timor. We must undo it with justice, firm commitment, and nonviolence. Urge your Representatives and Senators to ensure that the US provides significant financial aid for emergency assistance, reconstruction and development. And do it NOW

East Timorese, both within and outside East Timor, are facing a severe humanitarian crisis. Hundreds of thousands remain in camps in West Timor and other parts of Indonesia, essentially held hostage by the Indonesian Military and their paramilitaries. Others are still hiding in the mountains. All face starvation, dehydration and disease, the threat of which will only worsen with the start of the rainy season.

Demand that your Congress persons co-sponsor and vote for the East Timor Self-determination Act of 1999 (HR 2986 and S 1568) and the International Military Training Transparency and Accountability Act (HR 1063). These maintain temporary bans on US military and multilateral economic assistance to Indonesia until certain conditions are met, including safe and secure environment in East Timor, the withdrawal of Indonesian armed forces, unrestricted humanitarian assistance, the return of refugees and the implementation of the August 30 vote for independence.

HR1063 closes loopholes which the Pentagon has used to continue to train human rights violators. Although Congress had banned combat training for Indonesia under the IMET program, this bill would ban JCET and all similar programs to Indonesia and other human rights violators under law.

Senate Bill S 1568, sponsored by Russ Feingold (D-WI), Jesse Helms (R-NC), and 13 others has been approved by the Foreign Relations Committee but is still blocked from reaching the Senate floor for a vote. The House bill H.R. 2985 sponsored by Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) and 25 others is still stalled in the Asia Pacific Subcommittee of the International Relations Committee.

John Miller is Media and Outreach coordinator, East Timor Action Network
Internet: etan-outreach@igc.org; Website: <http://www.etan.org>

has been intentionally waging a "war" against Cuba using illegal and immoral methods. Within the document they define genocide as "the intentional subjecting of a group, national, ethnic, racial or religious, to conditions of existence that will bring on their partial or total physical destruction."

The proclamation states that the US embargo and continued terrorism have violated the 1948 Agreement on Genocide by blocking food, medicine, and other basic necessities; by intentionally destroying civil infrastructures through economic sabotage; and finally, by multiple attempts at assassinating Fidel Castro. Each of the Cuban organizations had arguments showing how the embargo has hurt its area of the population. The University students explained how the embargo has resulted in the lack of computers and how even basic school supplies are scarce. They also argued that the limited exchange of academic work and chance for international study is

Activist gather for national meeting

Bill Sulzman

A national conference was called by an ad-hoc group to gather activists from around the US and Canada who are working to stop the sanctions in Iraq. Some 200-250 accepted the invitation to Ann Arbor Michigan, October 15-17. They represented a cross-section age-wise and spectrum-wise: church groups, traditional peace groups, specialized groups working on Iraq, regional and local peace groups, individuals looking to get started in organizing, etc.

It was a high energy event with emphasis on information sharing about the situation in Iraq and what people have been doing in opposition. The speakers list, which included Kathy Kelly and Phyllis Bennis, was exceptional. Two films impressed me as being helpful in our organizing, and another—12 minutes in length—is about a children's campaign to gather signatures to stop sanctions.

Everyone stressed the urgency of the situation. The sanctions have turned Iraq into a basket-case of human suffering, with an economy in ruins and a political sphere devoid of activity. Saddam Hussein and his Bath party are in power and will stay in power as far as anyone can see into the future. The sanctions, which are supposed to change the political situation, are a total failure. The major presenters all agreed that increasing the amount of the "oil for food" program is not likely to change either the economic or political situation significantly.

Over and over in our deliberations we acknowledged the struggle against the "common wisdom" that what goes on in Iraq is all Saddam's fault. On television and in print every story leads with assertions that Iraq is really just Saddam Hussein and 22 million faceless carbon copies. The sanctions and daily bombings are to punish HIM and make HIM do what we want. Little by little some of the efforts tried so far and those we are planning here and around the country must be able to break through the facade of denial which has allowed this chronic situation to continue for over nine years.

I came back with an overall impression that there is hope for this progressive cause and a solid minority of hard working dedicated people willing to seek change based on moral conviction. That is all too rare in our consumerist society.

Bill Sulzman is the founder and director of Citizens for Peace in Space

A Look at Cuba

Amy McMillin

Somehow Cuba had been infiltrating my life for the last couple years: I had Cuban son in my stereo, a book of poems by Jose Marti appeared on my bookshelf, and Che's face shined from my bedroom wall. This past summer I was finally able to carry out my dream of visiting this forbidden island on a trip that was partly academic, travel, and part volunteer work. I came to realize after a few days in Cuba that my trip really only required two things: one would be to let go of any preconceptions I had about Cuba, and the second, to listen well. Cubans were never shy about expressing their opinions regarding anything I wanted to discuss, and they were sure to let me know that the situation there is nowhere near as black and white as it was presented back home. In the US, I felt that I had been presented with only two opinions of the situation in Cuba: love it or hate it. However, during my five weeks of traveling in Cuba, talking to people from all walks of life, studying, and working on an organic urban farm, Cuba has only shown herself to be the much more complex, chaotic, and beautiful patria that she is.

Revolutionary slogans run rampant, painted on billboards and walls, reinforcing a complicated hypocrisy between the ideal that Castro continues to work for and the hard actuality which Cubans live everyday. Truth is multi-layered—somewhere between the intense censorship of the revolution, everyday paranoia, bureaucratic rhetoric, and a sincere desire of communism for the good of the people. I met a former diplomat turned taxi driver to make more money and sugar cane workers who had to sell cement on the black market to support the family, but it was also the same people who claim that although socialism has some problems, capitalism will only make life worse.

I had so many questions: What happens to a country when 10% of the population flees, when a Revolution becomes "institutionalized," when human rights are redefined not as free speech, travel and individualism, but as free education and health care, and cheap housing. And most of all, I wonder where Cuba would be today without forty years of embargo imposed by the most powerful nation in the world? The Cuban people are wondering the same thing. Is the embargo

really the cause of the problems in Cuba, as Fidel most often indicates, or as some Cubans proposed to me, would Fidel still be in power without the US as a demonized enemy? Does Fidel need the US embargo to justify his regime and declare a common enemy to deter disgruntled Cubans from attacking his own faults as an outdated leader?

While both sides may be valid, it is undeniable that the US policy toward Cuba has not only pushed Cuba back to a 1950's level of development and caused much suffering, but it also created huge anti-US sentiment. Most Americans are unaware to what extent our government has attempted to destroy the revolution or exactly how the embargo has harmed the Cuban country, but even more so the Cuban people. This ignorance is not coincidental. In September, Cuba issued an international proclamation calling for support to end the embargo and return justice to the Cuban people. Our Congress people and many United Nations representatives received copies of this proclamation. Why didn't the American people hear about it?

The National Assembly of Cuba issued this proclamation declaring the US economic embargo on Cuba an act of genocide, with the hopes for creating more pressure and legal action to bring down the embargo. The National Assembly of Cuba, which brings together representatives of every Cuban social and mass organization, met to officially compile in one single document, forty years of "serious, systematic, and continuous genocide" and damage caused by the embargo. The proclamation was sent to members of the United States Congress, various United Nations representatives, as well as other international solidarity organizations.

The Cubans claim that their legal weight in this case is based on two of the most widely recognized international laws: The Convention for the Prevention and Sanction of the Crime of Genocide, approved by the United Nations in 1948, and the Agreement for the Protection of Civilians in Time of War. The Cuban Assembly also claimed that the US government could have been tried under a proposed International Tribunal, which the US, along with only seven other countries, refused to sign.

Calling US practices and policy "genocide" is not metaphor, the Cubans claim. It is evident from declassified U.S. documents, especially those issued between 1958-1960, only recently published in 1991, that the U.S. government

detrimental to their study. The Cuban Women's Federation, Youth Corps, and the Council of Cuban Churches also denounced the embargo's dehumanizing and "Antichrist" nature, especially the fact that it kills the innocent and young indiscriminately.

The Association of Small Farmers stressed concern with the limited productive capability to feed the island due to the embargo. They have also had to increase security because, in the past, people hired by the U.S. intelligence have introduced plagues and diseases that have harmed crops, livestock, and people. It is because of acts such as these that Cuba has maintained such a high level of paranoia, revealing as well the mental and emotional effects of the US policy.

Finally, it is with "all of the legal and moral strength to proclaim the truth" that Cuba issues this document. They "demand that the international community

please see "Cuba" on p7

AND BACK AGAIN

SOA Watch Update

Rochelle Finzel

A group of twelve—Dennis Apuan, Rochelle Finzel, Michele Fischer, Bev Jahn, Gina Kuwamura, Matt Jones, Amy McMillin, Bea Snyder, Eileen Schmitz, LizRutherford, Denis Wermuth and Barbara Huber—from Colorado Springs will embark on a pilgrimage to one of the Meccas of military power November 19-22. The destination is the School of the Americas (SOA) at Fort Benning in Columbus, GA.

Why such a journey, you may ask? Why are they spending the weekend before Thanksgiving at a military fort when they could be planning and preparing for a feast of turkey and stuffing and pumpkin pie? Why are twelve people deciding to risk possible imprisonment because of one military training facility? Because the School of the Americas' graduates have been connected to some of the worst human rights abuses in Latin America.

Our fellow Americans to the south are being killed and tortured while we in the North pay for such atrocities with our tax dollars. There comes a time when one can no longer sit back in their comfortable world and allow such injustices to occur. Graduates of the School of the Americas are responsible for the killing of six Jesuits, their housekeeper, and her daughter in El Salvador in 1989; the rape and murder of four U.S. churchwomen; the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero; the killing of over 900 civilians in the El Mozote massacre; the Uraba massacre in Colombia and the list goes on.

The SOA trains Latin American soldiers in combat, counter-insurgency, torture methods and counter-narcotics. SOA grads include notorious dictators Manuel Noriega and Omar Torrijos of Panama, Leopoldo Galtieri and Roberto Viola of Argentina, Juan Velasco Alvarado of Peru, Guillermo Rodriguez of Ecuador, and Hugo Banzer Suarez of Bolivia, as well as many of the military in Pinochet's regime. Countless innocent victims have been tortured and/or killed by soldiers who have been trained at the SOA.

Our government missed the opportunity of dealing with this national embarrassment. The House of Representatives voted in late August to withdraw a considerable amount of financial support of SOA, but the legislation was killed in a Senate committee. So the Colorado Springs delegation will join an expected crowd of 10,000 in Georgia for a weekend vigil and nonviolent protest at Fort Benning's gates. The event will commemorate the lives of thousands of victims and their families who have been affected by the School of the Americas. We hope to send a message to our community and to our nation: We will not sit idly by and wait while our country is teaching, supporting, and enabling these militaries to commit such heinous acts of violence.

The delegation will be leaving Colorado Springs on Friday afternoon, November 19th. Please join us in a send-off prayer and blessing at the 12:10 Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral. In solidarity with the delegation to Fort Benning, Catholic Charities of Colorado Springs is sponsoring a local vigil at noon on Saturday, November 20 at Palmer Park. The event is geared towards bringing together community members to act in unison with their counterparts in Georgia. It will commemorate the men, women, and children whose lives have been lost because of acts committed by SOA graduates. The vigil will honor those families who have been forever

Vote YES on Questions 1A, 1B and 1C

Richard Skorman

Traffic! Everyone agrees it's a problem. The tough part is agreeing on a solution. The fact is there's no single answer. But improved public transit clearly has to be part of the solution for the Pikes Peak Area.

That's the philosophy behind Questions 1A, 1B and 1C on the November 2 ballot. They're designed to improve the public transportation system so that it becomes an increasingly attractive option and one that really works.

Imagine not only being able to get

where you need to go, but being able to return before the bus service shuts down. Imagine being able to catch a bus in reasonable time if you just missed one! Imagine being able to commute on weekends as well as work days. Imagine the kids getting to their dancing lessons, soccer practice, Scout meetings without needing a chauffeur.

A hallmark of a great community is a great transportation system. This is an area where quality of life is a particularly precious commodity. We need to work to ensure that we don't ruin what makes the Pikes Peak region so special.

Questions 1A, 1B and 1C will take this area's underfunded, limited public

transit system to the next level, so it will attract more commuters and really make a difference in reducing traffic and pollution. That's good no matter whether you ride or drive.

These ballot questions propose major improvements in public transportation in the Pikes Peak Area at a very minimal cost—a sales tax of just a small fraction of a penny on the dollar. Compared to the amount of money most of us waste idling in traffic, it's a bargain. VOTE for 1A, 1B and 1C!

Richard Skorman, long time peace and justice advocate, is currently a member of the Colorado Springs City Council.

"We are a gentle, angry people and we are singing, singing for our lives."

Holly Near

Laura Gagnon

In the early hours of Saturday, October 2, a small but spirited contingent from Colorado Springs set out for the Third Annual Peacemakers retreat at Trinity Mountain Ranch, situated west of Denver between Blackhawk and Nederland. It was a cold, cloudy morning when Esther Kisamore, Barbara Huber and I headed out to join around forty peace activists from Denver, Boulder and Fort Collins. By the time we neared the ranch, the clouds had broken and we basked in fantastic fall sunshine the rest of the weekend.

Folks gathered together for the express purpose of relaxing, refreshing one another's spirits, and building community through song. Each of the group sessions during the weekend was a time to sing and listen to songs together. People were invited to call out names of songs they wanted to sing as well as treat the group to their own singing or playing or to songs they brought on CDs or tapes. We also heard some mean slide guitar.

The time was indeed "re-creation"—reminding us, hopefully, of the power and need for song and relaxed social time. To be gifted with the ability to lead groups in song, as well as the willingness to sing along, are tools to be nurtured and honed in any community wanting to keep its spirits up.

We were all grateful to the planners of this year's retreat: Eric Wright, Mary Sprunger-Froese, Matt Koval, Larry Leaman-Miller and Byron Plumley as well as to Mary and Brother John who staff the ranch. On the down side, Derick, the bear, was a no-show this year although we did see tracks on the porch when we arrived on Saturday. I trust it wasn't our singing.

Laura Gagnon osb, teaches at St. Mary's High School and is a member of the Active for Justice editorial board.

impacted by the violence. The public is invited and welcome to join us in remembering the victims, and in their memory, calling on our government to close the School of the Americas forever.

Rochelle Finzel is Social Concerns and Public Policy Assistant with Catholic Charities of Colorado Springs

Support the Colorado delegation to Iraq

Susan Gordon

For the past few months you have been reading and hearing about local efforts to oppose the economic sanctions imposed against Iraq. Many religious and civic leaders have spoken out against the indiscriminate and excessive way in which the sanctions punish the civilian population of Iraq. As a result of the sanctions millions of Iraqis are denied access to the basic necessities of life, including food, water, medicine, education, and employment. UNICEF reports that 250 people die each day as direct result of the sanctions. This includes 4,500 children under the age of five dying monthly, primarily from preventable and treatable diseases.

As a next step in the attempt to raise awareness about the impact of the sanctions, five folks—from Colorado Springs: Barbara Blake, Dorothy Schlaeger, Betsie Weil, Luke West and from Pueblo; John Kiernan—will travel to Iraq on November 25. (I was listed among delegation in the 10/99 AfJ but have since withdrawn to the support team. John Kiernan is taking my place.)

They will travel with Voices in the Wilderness, a Chicago-based organization working to end the sanctions through nonviolent resistance in the spirit and tradition of Mohandas Gandhi. They will spend approximately ten days traveling in Iraq visiting hospitals, private homes,

UN offices and both governmental and non-governmental offices, in an attempt to learn first hand the truth about the sanctions. This is an act of conscience, an act of civil disobedience, as delegation members will be breaking the sanctions law which forbids travel to Iraq.

They will carry with them a "Covenant of Solidarity" signed by local religious leaders expressing opposition to the sanctions and solidarity with the People of Iraq. They will also be carrying medical and school supplies for the children of Iraq.

This delegation needs our prayers and support in many ways. Donations are still needed for air and ground expenses, as well as for medical and school supplies. If you are able to help in either of these ways contact Susan Gordon 577-9132. The Delegation will be reporting back to all those interested, and especially to those who have participated through their support on Monday, December 13, at 7 pm in Gaylord Hall, of the Warner Center on the Colorado College Campus. They will also be eager to share with other groups in the community and would appreciate invitations to house meetings, church gatherings, or engagements with any groups to whom you may introduce them.

Susan Gordon, with her husband Patrick Hamilton, is the parent of Sarah and Clare.

Jubilee 2000 event in the Springs

Ruth Roland

Ana Lucia Restrepo, Honduran economist, will speak on Jubilee 2000 Thursday, November 4 at St. Mary's Cathedral Parish Center. Restrepo holds graduate degrees in economics and development planning. She directed the Oxfam UK's programs in Honduras for five years. Currently she directs the American Friends Service Committee's Reconstruction Program to rebuild Honduras after Hurricane Mitch.

Justice activists, church leaders, and the poor of the third world are calling the citizens of the industrialized nations to examine the situation of international debt. "...many persons, human beings created in God's image, especially the most vulnerable—women and children—are literally dying of the consequences of the debt. And that is intolerable." [Relieving the Third World Debt, US Conference of Catholic Bishops.]

The American Friends Service Committee and the St. Mary's Social Ministries Committee are sponsoring Restrepo's presentation in Colorado. There will be a potluck at 5:30 offering an opportunity to meet the speaker personally. Please bring a main dish, salad or dessert of share. The presentation will begin at 6:30. The Parish Center is in the undercroft of the Cathedral at 22 W. Kiowa.

Ruth Roland is co-chair of St. Mary's Social Ministries Committee. For further information regarding the event call her at 635-3549

Jubilee: a Call to Cancel third World Debt

Marie Dennis

While many people in the United States enjoy unparalleled prosperity that is putting the "good life" within easy reach, hunger, poverty and inequality are growing worldwide. 1.3 billion people live on less than one dollar a day. Over thirty thousand children under five die each day in poor countries of hunger and poverty related causes. The obstacles to justice in the world are enormous and crushing foreign debt is, for millions of people, one of them.

In Tanzania, where 40 percent of the population dies before the age of thirty-five, the government spends nine times more on foreign debt payments than on health care. In Mozambique, one of four children dies before the age of five due to infectious disease, yet the government spends four times as much servicing its debt as it does on health care. In Bolivia, where three-fourths of the population live below the poverty line, foreign debt payments consume over a quarter of the government's resources. In Nicaragua, the effects of Hurricane Mitch were much worse because of debt-driven poverty and environmental damage. The impoverished world, carrying a debt of \$2.2 trillion, now pays creditors significantly more in loan payments per year than it receives in aid.

The Jubilee, a theme found in Hebrew scriptures, and is evoked more and more frequently as the millennium approaches, makes it clear that justice is at the very heart of the Good News. Beyond its insistence that slaves be freed and land be restored, Jubilee requires that from time to time overwhelming debts be canceled to allow people a fresh beginning. In that tradition a great global movement called Jubilee 2000 is making its presence felt.

Although there is some debate about how the burden of debt in the impoverished world grew to the enormous proportions it has today, the facts and some of the causes are increasingly clear. The crisis first came to public attention in August 1982, with the imminent possibility of default by Mexico, but the problem began much earlier and arose from facts external to most impoverished countries including the dramatic rise in oil prices in the 1970s and the consequent glut of oil money in Western banks,

money these banks needed to put to work, making loans often ill-conceived and with variable interest rates. When the loans were first made interest rates were extremely low, but had skyrocketed



Demonstrators for Jubilee 2000 in US Capitol Rotunda, Rita d'Escoto Clark, Janet Gottschalk, Judy Coodes and Marie Dennis, were arrested 9/23.

to over 20% by 1981.

Corruption did not slow the lending either. Notorious dictators like Marcos of the Philippines and Somoza of Nicaragua are reported to have stolen millions and millions of dollars from their people. The banks knew of their reputation for corruption but made the loans anyway, exacting payment in lost educational opportunities, declining health and unemployment for future generations. Both creditor and debtor nations share the responsibility for the debt crisis, but under the rules of the global economic game, only the debtor countries, especially their most vulnerable people, shoulder that responsibility in the form of endless payments on accumulated interest as well as in fiscal austerity and structural adjustment measures imposed by the IMF as a condition for the new loans needed to pay off the backlog of debt. Beyond that no mechanisms for bankruptcy exist to which the increasingly impoverished countries can turn for relief.

No one disputes the fact that honorable debts with just arrangements for payback should be respected. But much of today's debt is anything but honorable.

Billions were lent by commercial banks, individual governments and multinational development banks to repressive or irresponsible governments for reasons the majority of their people neither

agreed with nor from which they derived any benefit. Many of these loans served the needs of the superpowers in the Cold war more than the needs of the people for a dignified life.

To this challenge many people around the world are responding. Calling for a jubilee level of debt conciliation by the year 2000, we are claiming that the start of the new millennium should be a time to give hope to people living in poverty: that it is time for a definitive cancellation

of the crushing international debt in situations where countries burdened with high levels of human need and environmental distress are unable to meet the basic needs of their people or achieve a level of sustainable development that ensures a decent quality of life. The Jubilee 2000 campaign insists that it is time for a definitive debt cancellation that benefits ordinary people and facilitates their participation in the process of determining the scope, timing and conditions of debt relief as well as the future direction and priorities of their national and local economies...time for a definitive debt cancellation that is not conditioned on policy reforms that perpetuate or deepen poverty or environmental degradation...time for acknowledgment of the responsibility of both lenders and borrowers, and for action to recover resources that were diverted to corrupt regimes, institutions and individuals...time for the establishment of a transparent and participatory process to monitor international monetary flows and prevent recurring, destructive cycles of indebtedness...time for Jubilee.

Marie Dennis is Director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns in Washington, DC and a Pax Christi Ambassador of Peace

Justice and Peace scholarship update

Tom Noonan

First and foremost: "Thank You everyone!" Last year was the first year of the Justice and Peace Scholarship. Through the generosity of so many people, we were able to award two \$500 scholarships in our first year of existence. This year we are tentatively trying to double the awards to two \$1,000 scholarships.

Sincere gratitude goes particularly to those who worked so hard on the committee last year: Gail Snyder, who was so instrumental in getting the whole project off the ground; Susan Gordon who took over as chair of the committee from Gail; Jennifer Ribachnonek who was there for everything required. Unfortunately these three key people are no longer with us—Gail moved to Oregon, Susan is concentrating on the Iraqi sanctions project and Jennifer came to the end of her volunteer year with PPJP.

The good news is that John Gudvangen, Carole Huber, Abi Afonja, Steve Milligan, Christina Martinez and I have all returned to the committee. Fortunately Molly Wingate has agreed to lend a hand with special projects. This points to a serious issue: You. We are seeking more members for the committee but you don't have to be on the committee to be involved. Outside the committee we have other business to conduct as well. For example, we need people to help with publicity, fundraising, mailings, etc.

Finally and most importantly, this scholarship is helping students further their pursuit of justice and peace. In addition, we are forming a community of people willing to support young people in their endeavors. Personally, I find working on this project refreshing and invigorating for a number of different reasons. So many people have stepped forward to help with time, money and other talents. We appear to be breaking new ground, too. As far as we know, no one has offered similar scholarships in our area. If you who are reading this article are from outside our area, please feel free to duplicate our efforts where you live. Meeting young people interested in the issues of justice and peace provides hope for the future. Please join in our efforts.

Tom Noonan is a founding member of the Justice and Peace Scholarship project which is dedicated to the memory of his daughter Gabriela.

"What is Community?"

—an assignment for some local high school students. Following are excerpts from some of the papers.

Carolyn McGrady: Community is a group of people that rely on one another for support. ... For survival one must belong to some type of community for one cannot be completely self-sufficient. The world itself is one big community in which each person is a link that performs a specific purpose.

Kate Pilant... Some attribute the "rebellion" of teenagers to a lack of community and family life. [That's] a valid statement. Young adults need the support of a community. Going through a stage of life where they are discovering themselves, it is essential to have people to lean on...

Jon-Michael Hanna:...A community is something that takes a long time to form. It is not something that forms overnight. But once it forms it becomes a place where one knows they will be heard, where it is safe to laugh or cry. It becomes a haven, a place where one would always want to stay. A place hard to leave.

Becky Wright: The breakdown of communication within the family pertains almost directly to the breakdown of com-

munities. Children are not learning about the positive effects of building up community. All they see are the negative effects on TV. They are constantly exposed to the violence and degrading aspects in the media which, in the end becomes all they know.

Tiffany Haberkorn: Community is not as lacking as is viewed to be... people come together for a common cause—school events, public service, volunteers at soup kitchens and shelters. The sense of community is created by service, participation and pride...

Dustin Schaefer: Our community is very corrupt. We are blinded by the confusion of our own superiority. Instead of focusing on real world issues we focus on petty achievements. Instead of putting in the headline the new chemistry theory just developed, we put up front "The Broncos Won!" Big deal. This has no effect on the world to come. Society is blinded by luxuries without really enough focus on the homeless, sick and unfortunate. I wish people would be concerned about world issues first.

Tiffany Pratts: ...A loss of respect is occurring among all ages and social classes. As respect is lost, a sense of oneness with community is lost, because you cannot have sense of togetherness without basic respect for each other. If

respect in personal relationships is lost, how can we expect to have respect in a larger community relationship?

Alanna Robertson: I think our community is corrupt. It's not just ours, it's everyone's. ...The justice system is messed up. People are getting no time even for murder...Innocent people are getting life or even death...I think it is sad that some of us are separated from our loved one's by Plexiglas. We've got to make peace in our neighborhoods and our schools before we can even think about making peace in our community.

Elizabeth Brunette: When I was younger, the children in the neighborhood would bake cookies for the new people who were moving in. Through that, nearly all the neighbors knew each other, whether they became good friends or just acquaintances. As I've grown up though, I watch people move out and new people move in and we don't meet. [Now] so many people have moved in and out of the house next door that I don't even know how many people live there. As the neighbors become less and less familiar with one another the community becomes weaker.

Karl Hasse: While the government and church worked to eliminate social, moral and political differences, a beast, large, gruesome, subtle and evil lurked in the background: the conglomerate. ... Where once people wore sweaters that had a

unique pattern and weave to identify their town, and ship designs were named after towns, and food had its own flavor and identity there is now the Abercrombie and Fitch Army, that patrols from sea to shining sea. Fords are the car of choice, anywhere. Everyone's morals, and ideals are identical—devoted to the same God, religion and values. What was once a defining image of America is gone and in its place stands a shiny new McDonalds

The authors of these excerpts are students of Laura Gagnon at St. Mary's High school. The editor regrets that limited space allowed only excerpts and only from a few of the many interesting submissions.

Floyd and I go to the UN

Barbara Huber

I arrived in New York just a few steps ahead of Floyd. I'd been so excited about the opportunity to go back to one of my favorite cities that I'd not paid attention to the travels of Hurricane Floyd as he progressed up the east coast. While packing the morning of my departure I checked the Denver Post's weather forecast for the Big Apple and it said it would be warm but cloudy, so I packed accordingly—though for reasons I couldn't put my finger on, I threw in my raincoat.

This trip was to the UN to attend the 52nd Annual NGO Conference. I was invited to represent the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, who in federation with other Sisters of Charity Congregations, have the status of a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). This year's conference theme was Challenges of a Globalized World: Finding New Directions.

At the opening session Wednesday morning we were addressed by no less than the Secretary General of the UN Kofi Annan, her majesty Queen Noor al Hussein of Jordan and Nobel Peace Laureate and former president of Costa Rica, Oscar Arias. From that point on through Friday, at two Plenary Sessions a day and a variety of early afternoon Workshops, we were involved in listening and dialoguing with an impressive roster of speakers.

The topics addressed were Trade and Finance: Who's in Charge?; Labour: The Neglected Partner? Culture and Communications Technology: Empowerment and Marginalization; New Partnerships and Structure of the 21st Century; and Globalization in the 21st Century. I chose to attend afternoon workshops on the Hague Appeal for Peace: Disarmament and Human Security and Religion and on the Ethical Dimensions of Globalization.

Who said what and what did I learn? The panels of speakers who addressed each session seemed deliberately chosen to reflect a variety of view points, though the keynotes at the opening session—all from the third world—expressed views that were refreshingly NOT made in the USA.

Both Noor and Arias' themes were: While globalization holds the potential for unprecedented benefits, not everyone has a key to the Global Village. Noor quoted the UN's Human Development Report of 1999: "The Human Development Index scores of 48 countries have fallen significantly in standard of living in the past year, including 10 of 17 Arab nations."

She declared, "The growing wedge between richer and poorer individuals and countries is both fundamentally unfair and seriously destabilizing." She raised the question that kept cropping up throughout the conference: "Many have begun to question the role of national government in this era of transnational corporations and instantaneous communications."

Arias spoke of "a definition of peace that goes beyond the short-sightedly demands of national security. We need to think of peace in terms of human security. This distinction bears frequent repetition. Human security is not just a concern with weapons—it is a concern with human life and dignity."

"How can we say there is peace when thousands are made to work in dehumanizing conditions? How can we say there is peace when the United States builds more prisons and fewer schools? How can we say that there is peace when

millions go hungry? In an age of globalization, those who make peaceful changes in our economy, politics and morality impossible, will make inevitable the future conflict arising from unacceptable inequities."

He also challenged our definitions of Democracy which should mean participation of ALL and, in a globalized culture, not nationalistic but humanist. "We have seen that the United States, while claiming to protect democracy in the developing world, has too often protected only a narrow, nationalistic self-interest."

His third crucial component of global thinking is reformulating our views on economic justice. "We must remember that true democracy is not merely the distribution of political power but also the distribution of economic power. Sadly, in this age of huge corporate mergers this fact is often overlooked by many policy-makers and business people who quietly solidify a global economic order based on greed and individual profit. But for many poor and working people throughout the world, it is an obvious fact."

One of the most impressive speakers was Canadian Craig Kielberger who was on the Labour panel. He'd already begun his presentation when I arrived a little late for the session. To my chagrin I need to confess that had I known that he was only 16 years old I may well have tuned out. But ignorance is bliss when it blocks prejudices, so I was very impressed with this founder of Free the Children, an international human rights campaign aimed at addressing the exploitation of children in the work force. This prodigy spoke with intelligence and passion tempered with gracious patience and remarkable poise in his interactions with his high-powered co-panel members.

At one point in the conversation Kielberger offered the criticism that while it was great that the UN had dedicated the first decade of the new millennium to the children of the world, "children had no part in the planning for this declaration?" Just as tape in my head on how "children could not be trusted to know what is best for them" was about to turn on it was stopped dead with his next sentence, "Remember that millions of children throughout the world are the sole breadwinners for their families." Ah, yes, childhood in the first world is the exception, not the rule. Kielberger, who has traveled extensively and seen it all first hand said, "Drug dealers put more faith in children than do schools or parents. Children are working to support their families, children are starting co-ops and are establishing schools."

Muslim speakers on two different panels, each in his own way, spoke of the vitality and movement in Isla. Ali Mazrui explained that Islamic time began with movement. "The founding date that Muslims commemorate is not the birth nor the death of Mohammed, but rather the date of his moving from Mecca to Medina." At another panel, a Muslim (I've lost his name) spoke of the changes within contemporary Islam as eventually having a global impact comparable to that of the Protestant Reformation.

My sketchy Media panel notes focus on, India's Shashi Tharoor—satirist, novelist and, current, Director of Communications in the Executive Office of the Secretary General of the UN. His succinct assessment of the way things are: "Broadcasting would be better named 'narrowcasting.' Who makes the news? People who speak English; TV's unwarranted influence in agenda setting

based on what they choose to report; Many a country's culture is more valuable than its technology; enormous tech-gap marginalizing the non-tech poor."

Peter Arnett (CNN) lamented the excessive reliance on polls and naive belief in power promoted by the "nightly news." He suggested that understanding technology is becoming essential to participation as a responsible citizen.

Representatives from the corporate world: Australian Greg Bourne for BP Oil (New Partnerships panel) and Sharon Cohen of Reebok (Labour) both admitted that their companies were influenced by protests and demonstrations of people who called them to accountability vis-à-vis labor and environmental issues. I was really sorry that the Agriculture panel was canceled because the storm—the entire UN closed down on Thursday afternoon. One Linda Fischer from Monsanto was to speak. What would she have said?

A German, Georg Kell is senior Economic Affairs Officer at the UN and so is liaison between the UN and the business community. He stated the obvious—perhaps because it's still moving from theory to practice—the need for corporate social responsibility and for trade agreements that link in the environment, human rights and labor issues. He observed that, strange as it may seem, the people and the country are often absent from discussions of development.

A panelist with as European a name and face as mine, speaking English with no trace of accent was introduced as the Guatemalan Ambassador to the UN. Why wasn't I surprised when he said every thing was just fine in Guatemala since the Peace Accords were signed?

Martha Ojeda, a fiery, Spanish-speaking Mexican woman, left the translator unable to keep up with her passionate account of the way things are—rape, harassment, long hours, union-busting—in the Maquiladoras.

William Vendley, General secretary of the World Conference on Religion, pointed out that there are genuinely new ranges of experience for which there are no institutions, for example, multinational corporations, larger and richer than many nations, but unlike nations have no normative standards of public values.

I think it was Joan Kirby of the Temple of Understanding, who, pleading for a sense of the common good, remarked that the GNP of one nation (can't remember which) is equal to what three Microsoft workers make in a year.

The final speaker in the final panel was one of the best: Speciosa Wandira Kazibwe, Vice President of the Republic of Uganda. I found enlightening her succinct description of the African economic dilemma.

"Most of us in the former colonies are still stuck in a commodity production of either one crop or mineral to which we add very little or no value at all before they are exported. Our attempts to add value to what we produce are often times thwarted by the escalation of tariffs by the developed countries on our value-added products. This bars our entry into manufacturing and industrialization. We therefore remain perpetual hewers of wood. We find ourselves competing with each other in the market because we produce similar commodities for the same market. So the prices of commodities are almost invariably perpetually depressed, so much so that the buyers actually set the prices for us. We are in the unfortunate position of neither setting prices on what we sell nor of bargaining over prices of what we buy. Is it any wonder we have not broken the barrier of poverty?

"For five hundred years, we in Africa, have always held the short end of the stick in the international market place....Agriculture for us in countries where it is the dominant sector of our economies is where we have our comparative advantage; that is where we would make our entry into the free global market but we find that the market is protected by the arch-priests of free trade. Unfortunately to the economists the distribution of wealth, income and poverty are economic issues and not moral issues but in our part of the world, globalization can only have a future if it addresses the moral questions as well."

But Kazibwe was optimistic for Africa. She declared that while the 19th Century was the Century of Europe and the 20th of America, the 21st Century will be the Century of Africa.

In the meantime—when my brain, on overload, shut down—I experimented with various bus routes to my digs on Washington Park, I bought a UN umbrella and walked in the rain, and, on Friday morning strolled through the UN garden. It was the morning after the storm and it had that fresh, "bright green" atmosphere that seems to say the earth had been washed clean.

I was delighted to find the Eleanor Roosevelt meditation bench. But most of all I loved St George and the Dragon. Have you seen it? It is a huge bronze statue—3x life size—of George thrusting his lance into a two headed dragon. When I first saw it I was up close, on the path that passed immediately in front of it. As I looked at the Dragon I thought that it was in disrepair because the sides of the animal were broken exposing some gears and machinery inside. Later as I ambled around the garden it came into view at a distance and I saw that that was not the case. George had indeed killed the Dragon whose name is War. Its guts were spilling out and they were the machinery of modern war: a bomb's nose cone, a piece of a jet plane, gears and wheels, etc. all painted that dead green we call khaki. It is wonderful and I laughed out loud at myself for not seeing it at first.

On the terrace above the garden the daily flag raising ceremony was, on this day, honoring all UN Forces—a shockingly large number of men and women—who had lost their lives in the line of duty during this past year. One speaker, with all the fervor and frustration of a preacher, scolded the little group of UN personnel who had assembled for the ceremony for those who hadn't come.

The sun was shining the next morning when I went to the airport but the power of Floyd was still palpable. My heart sank as I entered La Guardia. Mobs of people who'd been stranded were lined up at my ticket counter. But the process moved smoothly, I boarded and we left on time. Again in Chicago there were many people who'd been trying to get home for a long time. We were asked if anyone would be willing to take a later flight in exchange for a \$200 voucher. I was in no hurry so I volunteered. At the last minute, I was called to the podium to be told there was, in fact, room for me but only in first class! I'd never ridden in first class before and was a little unsure of the protocol but I managed to enjoy a dinner of smoked salmon with wine, head phones for Mozart and, best of all, a very roomy, comfortable seat!

Barbara Huber represented the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati at the NGO Conference.

DIGGING ROOTS/PLANTING SEEDS

Derailing the biotech express

Ronnie Cummins & Ben Lilliston

A specter haunts the boardrooms of Monsanto and the other Gene Giants. Mass public resistance against genetically engineered (GE) foods and crops in Western Europe and India, spearheaded by an incredible grassroots campaign in Britain, appears on the verge of spreading to North America and across the globe. If mass anti-biotech campaigns catch fire in North America and Japan—and solidarity and cooperation continues to increase between activists in the North and South—the Brave New World of agricultural biotech may be short-lived. Even more unnerving to certain sectors of the economic elite, trade wars and collateral damage could seriously undermine GATT and the World Trade Organization as Monsanto and other biotech hard liners (including the US government and trade officials) turn to ever more extreme measures to force the citizenry to “Shut up and eat your Frankenfoods,” and compel farmers to plant their “Terminator” and “Traitor” seeds.

The Great Butterfly battle.

In the most dramatic story of the year highlighting the environmental hazards of GE crops, *Nature* magazine (5/20/99) published a letter from Cornell University scientists indicating that pollen from Bt corn crops (crops injected with the pesticide *Bacillus thuringiensis*) is poisonous to Monarch butterflies. Headline stories of the threat to what the press dubbed “the Bambi of the insect world” brought home the fact—especially to Americans—that millions of acres of GE crops are already under cultivation in the US, with untold damage already being done to the environment and living creatures.

Although Monsanto and the biotech industry immediately tried to undercut the Monarch story, complaining that the studies were carried out in a laboratory rather than the fields, another recent study by scientists at Iowa State University conducted in and around the fields planted with Bt corn, showed similar results.

European Union (EU) authorities reacted to the Monarch story by announcing that previous approvals for Bt crops in Europe will now have to be reviewed and possibly reversed. The Bt-Monarch controversy comes on the heels of other recent studies showing that Bt-spliced crops kill beneficial insects such as lacewings and ladybugs, kill beneficial soil microorganisms, damage soil fertility and may be harming insect-eating birds.

In the face of the mounting consumer pressure and heavy media coverage of the Bt Monarch butterfly controversy, Japanese government officials announced in mid-June that they were suspending approval of Bt crops for agricultural production, pending the establishment of criteria for safety evaluation. Japan's ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) will also apparently decide by the end of the year whether mandatory labeling will be required for most GE foods.

In recent international meetings on the Codex Alimentarius, Japanese officials have refused to support the US position of “no labeling” for GE foods. Japan imports 77% of its soybeans from the USA, as well as 87% of its corn. One of the biggest nightmares of the biotech industry is that Japanese and Asian anti-GE activists will build a mass movement similar to what we are seeing in Europe and India. Japan is the largest feed grain importer in the world, purchasing 30-40% of US grain exports, while Korea and Taiwan combined often import

almost as much as Japan.

European Union wins Moratorium

On June 24, the European Union environmental ministers moved to implement the legal equivalent of a three-year moratorium on any new approved of GE foods or crops. The moratorium will remain in effect until more stringent EU safety regulations are put in place in 2002.

Not since April 1998 has a GE food been approved in Europe. “We’ve had a de facto moratorium and now it is cast in stone,” EU Commission spokesman Peter Jorgenson told a reporter from Dow Jones. While the powerful European biotech trade association, EuropaBio, criticized the moratorium as “deplorable,” Greenpeace spokeswoman Louise Gale categorized the ministerial decision as “A clear step in the right direction,” a recognition of EU citizens’ “Massive rejection of GMOs (genetically modified organisms) in food and agriculture.”

US Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky complained that the GE approval process in the EU had “Completely broken down” and warned that the White House was considering the possibility of economic retaliation by filing a formal complaint with the World Trade Organization. The EU decision comes in the wake of a massive grassroots movement across the continent which has provoked major supermarket chains and fast-food restaurants, food producers and animal companies in Europe to proclaim a ban on GE foods and food ingredients.

Stuart Eizenstat, nominee for the second-highest job at the US Treasury Department, testifying before the US Senate on June 29, 1999, provided insight into the administration’s perspective on GE crops. “Almost 100% of our agricultural exports in the next five years will be genetically modified or combined with bulk commodities that are genetically modified. The EU’s fear of bio-engineered foods is the single greatest trade threat we face.”

Rounding up the Losses

One of Monsanto’s lead GE products is Roundup-ready soybeans (RRS), designed to be resistant to the potent pesticide Roundup. With promises of higher yields, Roundup soybeans have already taken up 40-50% of the domestic market.

The UK’s *New Scientist* (7/10/99) contains an article on recently released USDA data on GE crops that essentially affirms Dr. Charles Benbrook and others’ analysis that herbicide-resistant and Bt crops are neither producing higher yields nor reducing pesticide use. According to Kurt Kleiner of the *New Scientist*: “Most American farmers who have turned to genetically engineered crops seem to be getting yields no better than farmers who grow traditional varieties. They also seem to be using similar quantities of pesticides.”

Not only is the promise of higher yield apparently false, but according to Dr. Marc Lappe, of Center for Ethics and Toxins, RRS soybeans are not as nutritious as the naturally occurring variety. Lappe published with two other scientists July 1 a peer-reviewed study in the *Journal of Medicinal Food* pointing out that Monsanto’s RRS soybeans contain 12-14% lower levels of beneficial, naturally occurring phytoestrogens (thought to provide natural protection against breast cancer, heart disease and osteoporosis) than conventional soybeans.

Monsanto has vehemently denied Lappe’s claims. Monsanto previously

intervened with a publisher to try to prevent Lappe and Britt Bailey’s anti-biotech book *Against the Grain*, from being published.

Some Buyers say NO

According to an article in the 7/2/99 *Farmers Weekly* (UK), after major US corn buyers Archer Daniels Midland and A.E. Staley announced they would no longer purchase GE corn which was unapproved for sale in EU, up to 20% of US corn farmers in some areas returned their unapproved GE corn seeds to seed distributors.

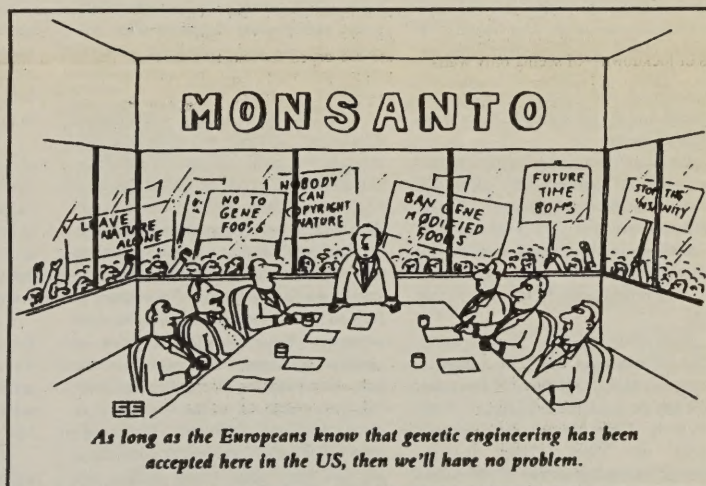
In the 5/6/99 issue of *Post*, an insurance magazine, a manager for insurance giant Cigna International, Maurice Pullen, recommended that insurance companies think twice before issuing insurance policies to genetic engineering companies. “Our experience with asbestos, PCBs, and other ‘miracle’ products should have warned us of the potential dangers of diving into issues before we have an adequate awareness of the exposures.”

According to the British and Brazilian press, more and more major supermarket chains, food producers and animal feed companies in Europe are turning to Brazil, rather than the United States (where GE and non-GE soybeans continue to be commingled), for their soybean imports. This is alarming to the US farmers and the White House, since US agriculture exports are already in crisis, with an overall 14% decline in exports since last year. Meanwhile prices paid to farmers for US soybeans have dropped to a 27-year low, with overall US soybean exports declining by 38%.

emergence of a serious debate and organized opposition movement in the US. The Biotech industry understands quite well consumer polls over the past ten years that show that 80-90% of Americans support mandatory labeling, and that 60% or so, if food is clearly labeled, would attempt to avoid buying GE products. They also understand that there isn’t more of a controversy yet in the US because consumers erroneously believe that GE foods (except for RBGH-derived dairy products) are not available. A 1999 study by the international Food Information Council, a government and industry funded group, found that 47% of Americans believe that there aren’t any genetically engineered foods on the market yet.

The biotech lobby apparently believes that a more moderate set of proposed national organic standards—one that specifically excludes GE, irradiation and toxic sludge—will placate US organic consumers. Beyond this, if the overall biotech debate in the US starts to get out of hand, they are willing to entertain the notion of partial, voluntary industry labeling. The White House and the Gene Giants believe that segregation and labeling of GE exports will placate Europeans and Asians, and that over time everyone will calm down.

In the meantime they intend to use the GATT, the World Bank, and the IMF, and other corporate and biotech-friendly institutions to rewrite global trade agreements and investment policies so that nation states no longer have the ability to respond to citizen demands for rigid controls over genetic engineering technologies. As an ultimate fall-back plan our



As long as the Europeans know that genetic engineering has been accepted here in the US, then we'll have no problem.

In addition the US has lost \$400 million in corn exports to Europe over the past two years because of the EU's public rejection of GE corn.

Organizing in the USA

Over three dozen NGOs and consumer groups in the US—including for the first time several national environmental groups—have begun holding anti-biotech meetings, participating in conference calls and organizing press events and protests. According to a report by Bill Lambrechts in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch on 5/30/99, a number of major non-profit foundations in the US are on the verge of pouring significant financial resources into public interest organizations in order to facilitate an American GE public awareness campaign.

Proponents of GE realize they're going to have to make at least some minor concessions on the biotech labeling front in order to head off a trade war with the EU, prevent the GE controversy from heating up in Japan and other major US export markets, and prevent the

sources tell us the White House would conceivably consider a general and deliberately vague label on food products that says something like: “This product may contain bioengineered or irradiated ingredients...”

Of course this is not enough. Campaigners in the US and around the world must prepare themselves for a protracted struggle. The battle has just begun.

This article is excerpted from *Campaign for Food Safety News* #20, 7/14/99. For more information, contact: Campaign for Food Safety (formerly Pure Food Campaign) 860 Highway 61, Little Marais, MN 55614

Letter from Prison

Editors note: The following is an excerpt from a letter dated 9/17/99, from the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary. It is vintage Ray—determined, wry, concerned for the welfare of others. What follows may well prompt you to write the prison officials BUT we request you do NOT do so. That's Ray's call, he hasn't made it yet.

It is useful to remember as you read this that Ray went straight to the Marion supermax from the Sedition trial and was one of the first sent to the "technofascist wet dream" of the ADX in Florence, Colorado —NOT because of his actions since his capture, NOT because of his actions while underground, but because of his political beliefs—because of who he is.

He opened his letter with a page devoted to his joy at the Puerto Rican nationalist prisoners gaining a marked measure of freedom, his sadness for those still held and closed by saying, "I know them to be principled, compassionate people who've sacrificed a great deal for the cause of Puerto Rican Independence."

Dear Friends,

The following summarizes the past four weeks: I left the bowels of ADX on 8/20. Because I'm classified "max custody" I was in full restraints including blackbox (a sometimes painful security device that's clamped down over handcuffs.) The escort's firepower, while impressive was not as overwhelming as I've seen in the past—albeit sufficient enough to prevent me from wandering off to smell the flowers.

I left ADX in a prison bus with barred windows. After all those long years of lockdown—of seeing only walls and a patch of overhead blue—I saw the outside world again as we wheeled into Pueblo, CO. The mountains, the fields, housing, billboards, people turning their heads to see a moving jail cell and all those colorful amazing vehicles...

Once outside, I felt like an outsider—a distant observer briefly scoping out the surface of american society—but not really a part of it. As my senses struggled to take it all in, the feeling of

exile intensified...a fleeting glimpse of a world from which I've been banned.

At the Pueblo Airport, I got on a Bureau of Prisons airlift—a flying slave fortress filled with prisoners of various security levels, from various parts of the country. Being black-boxed was one perk—the only black box on a flight of approximately 80 prisoners. I automatically get a window seat in the rear. Supposed to make it more difficult to get by the prisoners sitting next to me, and into the aisle where I could wreak all manner of havoc. Incidentally the new regulations prohibit more than one ADX prisoner at a time on these flights.

The first stop out was also the last—the Federal Transfer Center in Oklahoma City. All prisoners disembarked here and when I saw the staging areas inside it had the appearance of a slave market as eight to ten prisoners at a time stood in line on an elevated platform having leg shackles removed by guards as others examined the insides of their mouths and pat searched them. Just before disembarking from the plane I overheard prisoners who'd been through this FTC before talking about how they'd get a hot meal, phone call and be able to hang out in a common room outside their cells. Me—I'm "max custody"—so I figure they have different plans for my stay here but I'm shuffling along in the flow of prisoners trying to be anonymous. Fat chance—I'm the one black boxed and in a different color clothing than the khaki all the others are wearing.

I get called out and brought directly to a holding cell...got recuffed, and sent to SHU (segregation unit) where I spent the next ten days. No phone call, period. Cell light kept on 24/7. Got 5 one hour rec periods in nearby cages. Getting in the rec cages led me to a reunion with Bill Dunne. Hadn't seen him since '89 in Marion's seg unit. He's just finished his second Marion stint and was transferring to Leavenworth. We were able to see each other twice—a very welcome opportunity to get caught up on people, places and events and swap a few ideas and opinions. Always good to run across a comrade.

I left FTC on 8/30. Part of the flight was a mesmerizing fly-thru—a spread of

cotton candy cloud formations. Next stop Atlanta. A prison bus with four other prisoners passed through a poor/lower class neighborhood, then the penitentiary. From what I could see, it looks like the gulag version of the Great Wall of China. Built in 1902, it's the oldest federal pen after Leavenworth. Entering its walls I joined the roster of previous political prisoners held here: Eugene V. Debs, the great Socialist labor organizer and Pedro Alibizu Campos, this century's most respected leader of Puerto Rican independence, among others.

I was quickly processed and placed in SHU, the segregation unit. My first rude awakening was when I stepped into the cell. It was a two-man, two-bunk cell, both occupied. I turned to the guard and asked where my bunk was. He said I was standing on it—the floor. When I rolled out my ratty mattress on the floor next to a leaky shower and wet rags soaking up the discharge, it left only space enough to get to the toilet. Quite a abrupt change after 15 years of celling alone.

Following day I had a Captain's review—mandatory for new arrivals. The Captain was at his desk with an open file folder in front of him. He perused the file as he read me the riot act: He doesn't like me, doesn't like what I represent, said I present special problems and concerns, that I'm a "member of a terrorist group, a leader, proficient with explosives, martial artist," and that I did too many damn years in the Marion-ADX lockdown. (Guess they don't have much confidence in their own program!) He says he needs to examine my file. Right off the top he says I'm not going to the compound, i.e. general population. I'm too much trouble. He says I'll be kept in Administrative detention in the SHU for a minimum of 3-4 months. (Just what this is supposed to accomplish after all I've been through in the last 15 years is beyond me.) Then he'll take another look at me. And then, "if" they decide to let me in to the general population, they'll have so many restrictions I won't be able to piss without them knowing it. If they put me in the general population, I'll be monitored by something called the High Security Accountability System—supposedly reserved for a small number of prisoners deemed especially high security risk. I qualify due to my "political" jacket. Then he says I'll not be given ANY of my property arrived from ADX—no legal material, no stamps, no eyeglasses, etc. And no phone call. (New arrivals are supposed to be able to place a phone call within three days of arrival.

Finally, he added, a veiled threat. He does not want nor does he like anyone "in his business" Translation: I better not get people outside pressing for my release from Seg, and I better not file a grievance with the BoP over his decisions. And that was that. Nice fella!

Typically, it takes 3-5 days for new arrivals to be processed and enter the general population. Of course, I anticipated that they'd carry me differently than other prisoners—maybe 4-5 weeks in Seg before getting out to the compound. However, I didn't anticipate an overly extended, indefinite slamdown in Seg—and although all seg units are bleak, with varying degrees of poor conditions, I didn't anticipate conditions as bad as I'm in the midst of here. This one ranks among the worst I've been in and I've been in some serious holes—Unit IV at Trenton State Prison, Brushey Mountain, Walpoles' infamous 10 Block, Maine State Prison strip-cells and others. Nor did I anticipate they'd hold ALL my property. Hell of a thing.

So I'm on the cusp of significantly improving my situation over what it has

been for far, far too long. However, ironically, I'm presently stuck in deep shit that's far worse than the past 13 months at ADX's pre-transfer unit.

Within a week I got a bunk. They made sure to get prisoners off the floor for a VIP inspection. This won't last. We'll soon see dudes on the floor again, but I ain't getting out of this bunk for nobody! This place is grimy and we don't get the supplies we need to clean.

There's a class action suit against SHU guards and a Lieutenant for using 4-point restraints (chaining a prisoner spread eagle on a bunk or concrete slab as punishment—as opposed to using it to control very violent or suicidal prisoners.) The suit, I'm told, concerns guard assaults on handcuffed prisoners in Seg. Seg also uses strip cells called "side pockets" for those they consider "disruptive."

Additional note on the Puerto Rican commutation. Virtually all accounts I read in newspapers, quoting Clinton and some Democrats who support the commutation, stressed that none of those receiving commutation were convicted of offenses that resulted in deaths or injuries. Just wanted to state the obvious: nothing I've been convicted of involved the death/injury of anyone.

Love,

Ray

Note: Since this letter was written, Ray has received his eyeglasses and minimal amount of his personal items. His current address: Raymond Luc Levasseur 10376/016, Box PMB, Atlanta, GA 30315. For further information: December 16th Committee, Box 21073, 2000 SW College, Topeka KS 66621; dec16the@hotmail.com

To those Coloradoans who remember Tom Manning and his family: He is currently at the Bureau of Prisons Medical Facility in Springfield Missouri awaiting surgery for a hip replacement. The hip injury resulted from a savage beating by police back in 1985. Tom's mail will not be forwarded from Leavenworth so please write him directly at Springfield. He'd surely appreciate getting your cards and letters. Tom Manning 10373-016, P.O.Box 4000, MCFP, Springfield, MO 65808-4000

Cuba

continued from p2

support this struggle to defend the most elemental principles of justice, right to life, and peace and liberty of all peoples".

The U.S. and Cuban governments have bickered, committed inhumane atrocities, and kept longstanding grudges forever. I feel that true change in search of a more just and peaceful relationship will only come through action from the people. It is through people to people connections, something that has been prohibited for so long, that a better understanding, exchange, and communication can be realized. We are not just our government, nor are the Cubans theirs. Nor are they all Communists, and we all Imperialists. If we can look beyond the propaganda, theirs and ours, all we will find are humans, and I hope we can find some compassion in that.

Colorado College student, Amy McMillin, is interning with the Justice and Peace Commission in this year.

The Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commission is composed of people who, while looking to other traditions for inspiration and welcoming the participation and membership of all people, are grounded in the principles of justice and peace which are integral to the teachings of Jesus:

reverence for all creation
the power of nonviolence
solidarity with the poor and oppressed
the transforming qualities of relationship, reconciliation and community

Our task is to facilitate growth toward justice and peace in ourselves and in our sisters and brothers of the Pikes Peak community by providing alternative sources of information, facilitating formative experiences, and encouraging prophetic witness.

PPJPC Board of Directors: Beverly Ann Jahn - president, Jenny Finn- treasurer, Dorothy Schlaeger- director, Susan Gordon, Barbara Huber, Matt Jones, Esther Kisamore, Molly Mulligan, Tom Noonan, Mary Sprunger-Froese, Denis Wermuth

Active for Justice is published ten times a year by the PPJPC, a non-profit corporation. Material published does not necessarily represent the views of the Commission. Letters to the editor and other contributions for consideration are welcome. **Active for Justice** is not copy-righted. It may be reproduced in whole or in part without permission.

Subscriptions are \$15 a year. The mailing address is: Active for Justice, 235 E. Fountain Blvd., Colorado Springs, CO 80903-1329

Editor: Barbara Huber

Production: Deb Tudor, Barbara Huber, Bill Sulzman Phil Johnson

Distribution: Ernie Jones, Charles Williams, Dorothy Schlaeger, Jan Chappel, Dee Buchanan, Jacy DiFoggio, Katy Gregg, Phyllis Lucero, Susan Gordon, Barbara Huber

Active for Justice Editorial Board: Laura Gagnon, Jan Handke, Tom Noonan, Loring Wirbel, Barbara Huber

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

PEACE PLANNER

EVERY MONTH

* Nonviolent peace activists regularly keep vigil at various military bases in Colorado

- every Monday at Fort Carson
- the first and second Tuesday at Peterson AFB
- the fourth Tuesday at Schriver AFB.

Anyone interested in joining should contact Peter, 471-3405 or Dee, 685-1984.

* Every Monday at 6 pm Epimethian Press invites folks to First Congregational Church, N Tejon and St. Vrain, to fill prisoners' book requests.

* Third Wednesday of every month, the Colorado Coalition Against Gun Violence meets 3-5 pm in Denver at the Mile High United Way, 2505 18th St. Call CCAGV (303) 298-8001 for info.

* Third Saturday of every month the Housing Coalition meets at St. Mary's Cathedral, 22 W. Kiowa from 1 to 3 pm.

* Fourth Thursday of every month the Colorado Springs Chapter of Coloradans Against the Death Penalty meets at the J&P office, 235 E. Fountain, at 6pm.

* For up-to-the-minute information on Citizens for Peace in Space (CPIS) activities, call Bill, 389-0644.

N.B. CALENDAR ITEMS IN BOLD TYPE ARE THOSE PROGRAMS SPONSORED OR CO-SPONSORED BY PIKES PEAK JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION

NOVEMBER

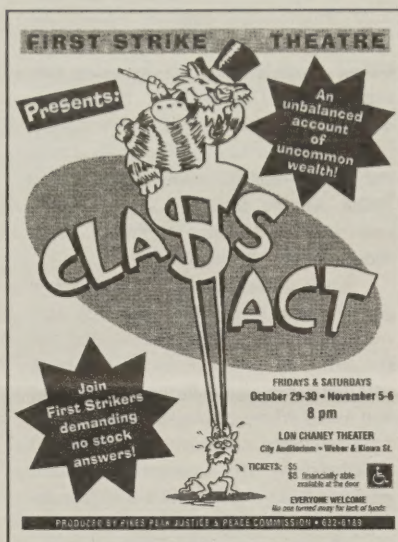
Tuesday, November 2
Zapatista!

A documentary on the struggle in Chiapas will be shown at Muenzinger Auditorium on University of Colorado Campus in Boulder at 7pm.

Thursday, November 4

Jubilee 2000

Honduran economist, Ana Lucia Restrepo will speak on the economic situation in Honduras influenced by debt, injustice and Mitch. The program at the Parish Center of St. Mary's Cathedral, 22 W Kiowa, will begin with a Pot Luck supper at 6:30 pm



Saturday, November 6
Urban Experience
St. Paul's confirmation class.

Sunday, November 7
Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commission monthly Board Meeting at 4 pm at 235 E. Fountain Blvd. All Commission members are invited to audit.

Wednesday, November 10
Candlelight Peace Walk for Hope, Peace and Light
The walk will begin 6:30 pm at the Peace Pole in Monument Valley Park (just south of the Uintah/Glen intersection) and conclude at All Souls Unitarian Church. (730 N Tejon) All are invited to participate.

Wednesday, November 10
Moving into Light: Everyday life as a means to Spiritual Awakening
Dr Mansukh Patel, best selling author and emerging world leader of everyday heart-based spirituality will lecture at All Souls Unitarian Church at 7:30 pm. To register for talk: 574-5452.

Friday, November 12
15th Annual Awards Night
Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer, author, activist, popular speaker [Remember 2/12/92 when PPJP brought him to town?] and Assistant Professor of Peace Studies at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota, keynotes the Denver Justice and Peace Committee's 20th Anniversary

Celebration at First Mennonite Church, 430 W. 9th Ave., (9th and Elati) at 7:30 pm. Tickets in advance \$10, at the door \$12.

Saturday, November 13
First Strike Theatre takes "Class Act" to Boulder, 7 pm, Forum Room University Memorial Center on CU Campus. Suggested donation \$5-8. Contact Ron Forthofer 303/786-8921 or the Rocky Mountain Peace & Justice Center 303/44-6981.

Friday, November 12
Iraqi support group planning Meeting
Those who are *not* going to Iraq will meet to plan simultaneous actions here in solidarity with our delegation in Iraq 11/25 to 12/6. 6:30 at the Rectory, 845 N.Spruce St.

Monday, November 15
Bud Welch, whose daughter Julie was a victim of the Oklahoma City bombing, will speak on his process of coming to terms with her death and her murderer. St. Mary's Cathedral Center, 22 W Kiowa, 7 pm. Free and open to the public. Earlier that day—10:30 am—Welch will be speaking at Regis University in Denver.

Wednesday, November 17
First Day
Planning meeting for the grand finale of the 1000 Days of Preparation for a 1000 Years of Peace. Come, get involved at 7 pm, PPJP office, 235 E. Fountain Blvd.

Thursday, November 18
Is the Political System in Colorado Broken?
A panel discussion featuring, among others, Common Cause, at 11 am Packard Hall, Colorado College

Weekend, November 19-21
Vigil and nonviolent Civil Disobedience to Close the School of the Americas:

Friday, November 19
Send-Off of the Colorado Springs' delegation to the national nonviolent demonstration at Fort Benning, Georgia at the 12:10 Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Saturday, November 20
A rally at Palmer Park at noon in solidarity with the thousands gathered at the School of the Americas at Fort Benning.

Sunday, November 21
Information tables in Church vestibules with material about the need to close the School of the Americas. Anyone wishing to help organize the rally and/or the information table at his/her church should call Rochelle Finzel, 636-2345.

Saturday, November 20
First Strike Theatre takes "Class Act" to Denver! 8 pm at El Centro Su Teatro, 4725 High St. Tickets—\$10, \$5 low income—available at the door or in advance from AFSC, 303/623-3464. Seating is limited.

Saturday, November 20
Monthly Meeting of Housing Coalition
St Mary's Cathedral, 22 W.Kiowa, is the new downtown location of the monthly meetings. It is wheelchair accessible and there is plenty of free parking. Meet from 1-3pm.

Sunday, November 21
Pastors for Peace

A delegation enroute to Nicaragua and Honduras will be stopping in Colorado Springs. Plans are not yet finalized for an opportunity for us to meet with them. Hold that date and call 632-6189 closer to that time for details.

Monday, November 22
Send-off of Delegation to Iraq
Gather at Shove Chapel on the Colorado College Campus at 7:45 pm for a Ceremony followed by a reception in the Chapel dining room

Thanksgiving Day, November 25
Colorado Springs Delegation leaves for Iraq with Voices in the Wilderness

Friday, November 26
Buy Nothing Day

DECEMBER

Sunday, December 5
Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commission monthly Board Meeting at 4 pm followed by a Christmas Pot Luck at 6 pm at 235 E. Fountain Blvd. All Commission members are invited to audit meeting and join us for supper.

Monday, December 13
Back from Iraq: a Report from the Delegation
Come to Gaylord Hall in the Warner Center on the Colorado College Campus to meet with the delegates and hear about their experience in Iraq.

Friday, December 31
First Night
See First Strike. 6 pm Lon Chaney Theater. Confirm by calling us.

Wednesday thru Sunday, December 29 through January 2
Millennium 2000: Walking the Ways of Peace

The Nevada Desert Experience, together with Fellowship of Reconciliation, Pax Christi USA, Healing Global Wounds and Los Angeles Catholic Worker, invite you to come to Las Vegas (Bishop Gorman High School) and to the Nevada Nuclear Weapon Test Site for prayer, reflection and action. 12/29-30 Youth Day; 12/30 evening, opening ceremony; 12/31 keynote, workshops, party, at midnight over a thousand people join a candlelight procession onto the Test Site; 1/1 Vigil on Las Vegas Strip; 1/2 Panel of anti-nuclear organizations and Closing Ceremony. Join special guests Jonathan Schell, June Stark Casey, Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, Dr. Rosalie Bertell, Daniel Berrigan, Ched Myers, Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb, John Dear SJ, Rabbi Margaret Holub, Louise Vitale OFM, and a multitude of others. Registration fee of \$75 includes housing, & eight meals. Call Pat Bell at Horizon Travel 702/451-0406, for discounts on 3 major airlines.

JANUARY

Saturday, January 1
First Day
Begin the new millennium by keeping the First Day of the First Year of the First Century of the 3rd Millennium in at First Congregational Church.

SUPPORT THE COMMISSION

Yearly subscription to Active for Justice \$15

Yearly subscription and Commission membership \$40

Name: _____

Address: _____

Zip: _____

Phone: (H) _____

(W) _____

Please clip and return with your tax-deductible donation to:

Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commission
235 East Fountain Blvd.
Colorado Springs, CO 80903-1329
(719) 632-6189